

Glenn are these types of heroes who continue to defy limitations and inspire others to play leading roles in their communities. However, there are other, lesser-known older Americans who have been important to their own communities and now make use of the services of the Older Americans Act. The least we can do is to assist those who have given all they can and want to continue to live healthy and active lives.

Long life is a gift we treasure, and along with this gift comes a responsibility. Renewing the Older Americans Act is responsible action that provides security for the next century and will foster longer, healthier, and more productive lives for all Americans.

AMERICAN AGRICULTURE IS IN CRISIS AND NEEDS HELP NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, this past week it was announced that North Carolina farmers' earnings had dropped by \$1 billion in 1998 over 1997. I was astounded when I read the article. But similar problems are being experienced all over America by our farmers. The farm crisis in America should be a concern for every American.

I have said many times that the people in this country must realize that food does not just come from the grocery store or from the supermarket. It comes from the blood, sweat, and tears and hard work of some of the hardest-working, God-fearing people in this country, and their families work hard. We cannot stand by and allow the farmers of this country to go out of business and let our farms be turned into strip malls and parking lots.

Whether it is the wheat farmer in the Midwest, the cotton farmer in Texas, the vegetable farmer in Florida, or the tobacco farmer in North Carolina, farmers help build this country, and they deserve to have us stand by them in times of crisis. If we do not, we will pay the price through the devastation of our rural communities and higher prices at the grocery store ultimately.

I am committed to working with Congress to find solutions that will restore profitability to agriculture in America and allow mothers and fathers to pass on this honored professional farming to their sons and daughters, because a lot of young people in this country are getting out of the profession because they cannot make a living. We must restore the farm safety net in this Nation before more farmers and their families fall through the cracks.

Mr. Speaker, the bumper crop of wheat last year and again this year that is now being harvested and is being seen in many parts of the coun-

try are suffering from some of the lowest prices in recent years. Farmers are finding out that they cannot produce themselves into prosperity with the low prices we are having. In some parts of the country, some farmers are already reeling from drought. This Congress must do something before it is too late for our farmers and their families.

We must start by reforming crop insurance, breaking down trade barriers, providing greater access to low-interest loans and credit for new and struggling producers, and provide support to farmers in times of dramatically low commodity prices like we are seeing now, all commodity prices. However, the first thing we need to do is to realize, and my colleagues in this Congress need to understand, that American agriculture is in a crisis, and it requires action now.

Just last week this Congress passed an agriculture bill at a time of crisis in agriculture, and what did it do? It cut \$102 million out of it. That is how we care about farmers. I want my colleagues to know I voted against it, because I think it was the wrong thing to do at the wrong time. North Carolina farmers and the North Carolina economy cannot afford another loss like we had in 1998, and I am going to continue to call on my colleagues in this body to stand up and be counted, because the farmers of this country cannot be allowed to go broke. Another \$1 billion loss over last year's economy would put most farmers out of business.

Mr. Speaker, I want to share just a few comments out of an article in the Wilson paper this week. It talked about a farmer who was harvesting his wheat. He had the best wheat harvest he has had in years on winter wheat. He had reduced his production from 200 acres to 160 acres. For the folks in the Midwest, that might not sound like a lot of wheat. In North Carolina it is a considerable crop. He planted wheat because all of the other commodities were so low, and he could double-crop and put in soybeans behind it. Well, when he put it in for market this past week, it was \$2.15 a bushel. A loaf of bread is about \$1.65 a loaf, so I can tell you who is making the money, and it is not the guy who is producing the wheat, it is someone in between.

Here is what he had to say. He said, all of the other commodities were also down other than wheat, but we had to plant something, and wheat was a good crop to plant when one wants to double-crop and plant behind it. He was fortunate. Even in the drought times we are now feeling in North Carolina, he got three-tenths of an inch of rain on Sunday and is now planting soybeans behind the wheat. Anyone that knows anything about agriculture knows that if it is dry and you get three-tenths of water, that will settle the dust maybe, but not much more.

My friends, we have to pay attention to American agriculture if we want to continue to eat and have the farmers continue to produce.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SHOULD INCLUDE JUSTICE FOR ALL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, in Washington there are a lot of well-intentioned policies that are often misguided and often result in unintended consequences. There are those who claim they want to unite the country and bring people together, but in reality, the policies in and of themselves divide people. I will give my colleagues a perfect illustration of what I am talking about.

There is a doctrine that has recently been the goo-goo of so many folks here in Washington across the country called environmental justice. Now, according to the proponents of this doctrine, there are actions that have been taken by governments, local, State or otherwise, that disproportionately affect minority communities. The problem here is happening and occurring right in my community in Staten Island. I will give an example.

We have the country's largest landfill. All of the garbage generated in New York City right now, about 9,000 tons per day, ends up in Staten Island. Staten Island happens to be a community that is 80 percent white. So what happened several months ago as we stepped up our efforts to close the landfill on Staten Island? The EPA and the White House Counsel on Environmental Quality and about 60 other officials marched in New York City, not to look at the landfill, but to look at transfer stations in the south Bronx. Their reasoning is that the south Bronx has a problem, but where the disconnect is and what these proponents of things like environmental justice seem to forget is that if there is a health problem or if there is a problem that adversely affects one person, it does not matter if the person is white, African-American, Latino, Chinese-American; if it is bad for one, it is bad for everybody.

So as they parade these 60 officials through New York, they do not even come across the bridge to Staten Island. So how is it logical that we can have a transfer station problem in the south Bronx where the garbage is transient, and we do not have a problem with an open, unpermitted garbage dump that is about 160 feet high right now of rotting garbage? And what is the response? Well, you do not have a remedy under environmental justice because you are not in a minority community. That, folks, is not American.

This Nation is about equal opportunity, and, by God, if there is a problem in the south Bronx with the transfer stations, if there are young children or there are families that are adversely affected by what is occurring there, then somebody needs to fix it. I am not saying that because whether it is black or white or Latino, but you cannot look me in the eye and tell me that the same should not apply to a community that happens to be 80 percent white. Because I say to my colleagues, and the folks who may be listening and the folks at the White House and the folks at EPA, the folks who are espousing this doctrine across the country, we have a lot of African-Americans who live around the landfill, we have a lot of Latino-Americans, a lot of Chinese-Americans, and they are just as adversely affected by the odor and stench of the landfill.

I would hope they would open their eyes to what this country is all about. They talk about environmental justice. This country is about justice for all. I hope they wake up and see the light. The people of Staten Island have been adversely affected by this; they have been adversely affected by the decisions that they are making on a daily basis, and as we asked today, the reason why I am standing here today is when we asked for parity, when we asked for quality, when we asked for the same level, if not less, than what they did for the south Bronx, we were told "no." That is not justice, environmental or otherwise.

CHILD SAFETY LOCK ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, tonight I stand with members of the Women's Caucus to urge this House to vote on sensible and purposeful gun control legislation.

Mr. Speaker, these last few months have been a sobering experience for us in this country with the rash of gun-related deaths of our children. However, I had long known that the acts of youth violence that permeate our schools and communities were real in my district. This is why I introduced the Child Safety Lock Act in the 105th Congress because of the ravishing gun violence in my district. We must provide safe havens and an environment for our children that will be conducive to their well-being and safe from fear.

I have reintroduced this bill in the 106th Congress because it was not the climate at that time for gun legislation, as it is now. It is time, Mr. Speaker, for us to act now, or we will continue to see a repeat of Littleton. No one wants that.

My Child Safety Lock Act defines what a locking device is and provides

for locking devices and warnings on handguns and penalties related to locking devices. It also establishes general authority for the Secretary of the Treasury to prescribe regulations on governing trigger locks.

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It allows the Secretary of the Treasury to issue an order and/or inspections regarding a trigger lock device which is in violation of the law. However, the debate cannot just be solely on handgun control.

It must be on education, as well. This is why I take 2 percent of the firearms tax revenue and use it for public education on the safe storage and use of firearms.

In addition to the child safety lock, Mr. Speaker, last year I introduced the PAAT Act, which prohibits the shipment and delivery of alcohol to minors through the mail and over the Internet. This bill requires senders and/or shippers placing packages for shipment in interstate commerce that contain any alcoholic beverages to place a label on the package in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

It requires that packages containing alcoholic beverages of any kind be accompanied by documentation showing the full legal name and address of the sender and shipper. It also requires age verification prior to shipment, and an adult's signature upon delivery. It levies fines to senders and shippers violating the provisions of this act.

These amendments, Mr. Speaker, will protect our children, our most precious resource, and will help to create a safe haven and a conducive environment for them. They deserve just that.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the House to pass very sensible gun legislation. We must have the courage to stand firm and avoid the continued senseless bloodshed and loss of lives of our children around the country. A sensible gun bill and amendments can protect our children, and in doing so, we are protecting our future.

ONLY A MORAL SOCIETY WILL MAKE OUR CITIZENS AND THEIR GUNS LESS VIOLENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRADY of Texas). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, we will this week fully debate the issue of school violence. If we had remained a constitutional republic, this debate would not be going on. I sincerely believe this kind of violence would be greatly reduced, and for the violence that did occur, it would be dealt with as a local and school issue. Responding emotionally with feel-good legislation in the Congress serves no worthwhile purpose, but makes the politician feel like he is doing something beneficial.

In dealing with the problem of violence, there is a large group here in the Congress quite willing to attack the first amendment while defending the second. Likewise, there is a strong contingency here for attacking the second amendment while defending the first.

My question is this: Why can we not consistently defend both? Instead, we see plans being laid to appease everyone and satisfy no one. This will be done in the name of curbing violence by undermining first amendment rights and picking away at second amendment rights.

Instead of protecting the first and second amendment, we are likely in the name of conciliation to diminish the protections afforded us by both the first and second amendment. It does not make a lot of sense.

Curbing free expression, even that which is violent and profane, is un-American and cannot solve our school problem. Likewise, gun laws do not work, and more of them only attack the liberties of law-abiding citizens. Before the first Federal gun law in 1934, there was a lot less gun violence, and guns were readily accessible to everyone. However, let me remind my colleagues, under the Constitution, gun regulations and crime control are supposed to be State issues.

There are no authentic anti-gun proponents in this debate. The only argument is who gets the guns, the people or the Federal bureaucrats. Proponents of more gun laws want to transfer the guns to the 80,000 and growing Federal Government officials who make up the national police force.

The argument made by these proponents of gun control is that freedom is best protected by the people not owning guns in that more BATF and other agency members should have them and become more pervasive in our society.

It is disingenuous by either side to imply that those who disagree with them are unconcerned about violence. Everyone wants less violence. Deciding on the cause of the hostile environment in our public schools is the key to solving this problem.

A few points I would like to make.

Number one, private schools are much safer than public schools.

Number two, public school violence has increased since the Federal government took over the public school system.

Number three, discipline is difficult due to the rules, regulations, and threats of lawsuits as a consequence of Federal Government involvement in public education.

Number four, reading about violence throughout history has not been a cause of violence.

Number five, lack of gun laws has not been a cause of violence.

Number six, the government's practice of using violence to achieve social